

P R I V A T E W O R T H
THE
B A S I S O F P U B L I C D E C E N C Y
AN
A D D R E S S
TO
P E O P L E O F R A N K A N D F O R T U N E .

DEDICATED TO
THE BISHOP OF LONDON.

BY
A M E M B E R O F P A R L I A M E N T .

If virtue and religion were established as the necessary titles to reputation and preferment, and if vice and infidelity were not only loaden with infamy, but made the infallible ruin of all mens pretensions, our duty, by becoming our interest, would take root in our natures, and mix with the very genius of our people.

SWIFT.

L O N D O N :
PRINTED FOR W. RICHARDSON, UNDER THE ROYAL EXCHANGE.

M.DCC,LXXXIX.

TO THE RIGHT REVEREND FATHER IN GOD,

B E I L B Y,

L O R D B I S H O P O F L O N D O N.

THE highest responsibility is annexed to all those powers, natural, sacred, and civil, with which God and society have invested your Lordship. Your's, my Lord, is their dignity; their utility belongs to the public: and there never was a time in which their best exertions were more necessary than now. Your Lordship's accession to the See of London was the more generally satisfactory from the expectations raised by the application of them under a direction thus virtuous and respectable. The following Address, which aims at a similar tendency, has therefore a just claim on your Lordship's patronage.

During the late melancholy interregnum, the apprehensions of the wise, the serious, and the thinking part of mankind, were much

A

alarmed

alarmed by that ferocity which distinguished the conflict of the two great parties who divide the country. It can matter very little to a large majority, whose industry has rendered them independent, what motives impel the votaries of ambition in thwarting each other. The constitution effectually secures the interests of the whole by prompting one set of men to seize on the public confidence by the temerity, the insignificance, or delinquency of another. The voice of the people rendering in this manner the patriotism of their friends triumphant, by confounding the machinations of their enemies, will always prove their best protection. But how the characters of such as fill the superior walks of life may affect inferiors, and operate on public decency, is an object peculiarly interesting to all who have any sincere regard for the laws of heaven or the laws of England. And it is not easy to make a conscientious election among candidates for power, who are chiefly distinguished by politics without morality, morality without religion, and religion without morality; who cover private profligacy by public pretension; and who substitute prudery for virtue; or resolve all human and divine obligations into mere form or etiquette. What are all these but certain traits of the same low, unprincipled character? And surely he can be no patriot, however eminent and popular, whose abilities are prostituted in fabricating apologies for obliquity, or who does not cheerfully forego a little of his own inclination for the benefit of others; no philosopher, who asserts not the dignity of his nature at
the

the expense of his passions; and no statesman, in whose measures there is a general diffidence, of whose integrity there can be a doubt, whose principles are as pliable as his propensities are unaccommodating. For all who have any settled opinion of the subject are agreed, that some degree of personal probity is still necessary to public worth; that the best criterion of a good citizen consists in discharging, with inviolable punctuality, all obligations to God and man; and that there can be no sound constitutional policy where there is not the highest integrity and honour.

Such, my Lord, is the levity even of the British Senate, that a bare recital of these truths would probably either provoke the aversion, or convulse with laughter the whole House. The fact is, our best blessings seem no longer valuable in their estimation to whom the protection of them is intrusted. The few among us not ashamed to live in the fear of God, and who have the hardihood to avow their convictions *in the face of the world's dread laugh*, because their speeches have generally a *tincture of religion* in them, are seldom heard with decency or patience. And what, my Lord, can the piety of that people be, in whose delegate capacity whatever relates to the great concerns of immortality is an object of ridicule! For no elocution is now in fashion, or will be relished, but such as abounds with political speculation, the pleasantries of genius and wit, party invective, or personal sarcasm.

Indeed, my Lord, there seems no better way of reviving the obsolete virtues of our ancestors, than by resuming the good old practice of *going to church*. Were it possible to make this fashionable in your Lordship's populous diocese, its effects would be palpable and universal. The example of the metropolis would pervade the whole kingdom; since, whatever mode predominates most in the centre usually extends its influence to the extremities of the island. Bring this great spring to its former tone or temper, and every part of the machine will instantly recover its natural strength and harmony: but while there is not a moment of our time more sacred than another, and while every place, every pursuit, every avocation, and every party is preferred to the house and the worship of the living God, like all people without religion, our manners must be gross and turbulent; superiors as regardless of decency as inferiors are of principle; the great vulgar and the small not less prodigal of the present than if not connected with the future; public life a scene of prostitution and venality; and even the hallowed shades of domestic tranquillity and friendship rarely exempted from the ferment of ambition, the rage of folly, or the taint of vice.

Your Lordship's inferior clergy are not the most likely instruments for accomplishing this great work. Indeed a general revolution in the morals and religious sentiments of men is an event

so interesting and momentous to all, as can hardly be expected from a few of the most insignificant. In no part of the world is the sacred and venerable function of the priesthood so debased and irreputable as with us. Young men are eager to be employed, not where they can best correct the passions of others, but where they may indulge most securely their own. Thus situated, in how many instances do not all the decencies and delicacies of the profession suddenly yield to habits of dissipation; and a youth of idleness, of levity, or of fashionable extravagance, is seldom followed by any higher improvement than a profligate knowledge of the world, an acquaintance with all the resources of diseased appetite, the hacknied cant of libertinism, the artifices of hypocrisy, or the sophistries of vice? Miserable people! who have no better instructors than men of the lowest manners and the loosest lives. Our own foibles tempt us to magnify and even triumph in the detection of theirs, and their utility ceases the moment their reputation is lost. Few audiences are enlightened or polished enough to discern or relish a composition of taste, but all are sufficiently aware that a teacher of religion should himself be religious; and that worship can have no charms for the serious where the devotion is directed or led by a profligate, a rake, or a sot.

Happy were it, my Lord, for the public, for the profession, and for religion, that these abuses originated only with a few wrong-headed

headed individuals, who, by interest or intrigue, obtain holy orders without a regular education. In the most relaxed state of discipline these extra-admissions are not frequent, and the circumstances connected with them are generally such as may be expected to operate more or less as a check on the worst minds. You well know, my Lord, what licentiousness prevails in our universities among youth of all ages and denominations. By *laying hands* on none but such as are bred in one or either of these, your Lordship may possibly guard against an *illiterate*; but some other means must be adopted for preventing, what is yet worse, an *immoral* clergy: and whatever these means are, your Lordship cannot more effectually promote the honour of your Master in heaven or the benefit of his friends on earth, do greater credit to the venerable station you fill, or better acquit yourself to God and man, than by giving them an immediate trial.

Solicitude for the honour of a profession, always in the highest repute in the purest times, and among the best men, fills me with abhorrence of such individuals as thus degrade and vilify it in the eyes of the world. The clerical institution constitutes a principal part of that form or mechanism which, with some correction in this, and other less material points, might certainly be more accommodated to general convenience and utility. Not to enter into the controversy of abridging, curtailing, or reforming the *Liturgy*, may not
 5 the

the time of the *Evening Service* be altered for the better? Surely an hour appropriated by custom to bodily refreshment is the most unfit that can be chosen for the public duties of devotion! Few servants, and no other of almost any family, can then attend; and all the remaining part of the Sabbath must be lost, or, at best, but very improperly occupied. Is it not, my Lord, while the doors of almost every church in town are shut, that those of conventicles are open, that sectaries of every denomination multiply and gather strength; that our excellent establishment is undermined, deserted, and betrayed; and that so many of the lower orders flock after preachers stigmatized by the name of Methodists, because earnest and faithful in discharging the duties of their station, while a much greater number of their betters are infinitely worse employed?

It is, my Lord, from a careful attention to the state of religion in the metropolis, as it affects and fashions the public mind, that these hasty and detached hints, thus loosely combined, are submitted to your Lordship's consideration. Their aim is of the most serious and general importance. They originate in no cynical, invidious, or plebeian motive; but in a sincere conviction that, as the soul is more precious than the body, heaven more desirable than earth, and eternity more momentous than time, the blessings of true religion proportionably transcend all others.

That

That the Spirit of Almighty God may give efficacy and success to all your Lordship's ministrations; direct your talents and virtues to their best ends; and make your station, your example, and your labours, what those of all bishops should be—public blessings to thousands, and *a crown of joy and rejoicing* to your Lordship *in the day of Christ*—is the sincere prayer of

THE AUTHOR.

Abingdon-street, Westminster,
March 20, 1789.

PRIVATE WORTH THE BASIS OF PUBLIC DECENCY;

OR,

AN ADDRESS TO PEOPLE OF FORTUNE.

E X A M P L E.

FROM the cynical asperities of years, the envy of poverty, or professional dogmatism, my readers have nothing to fear. It is the rich, the great, parents, heads of families, and all who have any share of domestic authority, the liberal and civilized in every denomination of life, I am chiefly solicitous of addressing on this occasion. With many of the most respectable among you it is often my happiness to meet both in public and private in the liberal scenes of promiscuous festivity, and in the more retired and tranquil circles of selected society. Should any thing affecting, serious, or even severe, strike you in what follows, impute it not to any mean passion or sinister purpose, but to that familiar sincerity and good-natured concern which is due from one neighbour, one acquaintance, or one friend, to another. For whatever foible may provoke my ridicule, or improprieties betray me into sarcasm, be assured the most unguarded or unaccommodating expression that escapes me is intentionally kind, and comes from one of ourselves, and one

too who urges nothing on his countrymen in which he is not ready and happy to set an example in his own conduct. He writes not for the vulgar or the vicious, and only wishes to make the best use in his power of that freedom which confidence in the liberal construction of the candid and polite so naturally inspires. All his hopes of success are founded on the exertions of the good, who, from their number, their property, and their interest, have still sufficient influence, with a little prudence and attention, to fashion or correct as they please the manners of others.

Impertinent, invidious, or disgusting, as we generally deem the libels daily uttered against high life, or people of fortune, they are by no means so unreasonable as many parts of our own conduct. Right and wrong are principles as stubborn in morals as facts are in nature. Selfishness, stupidity, or profligacy, may for a while confound, but can never altogether annihilate the distinction. And, in an age remarkable for nothing so much as the extinction of decency, the degradation of worth, and the dereliction of whatever was dear to our forefathers, the friends of religion and honour should unite, and patronize whoever espouses the same side, and makes a common cause of piety and virtue. It is surely the present interest of many, as well as the future interest of all, to wish the world better. Every advocate for reformation should take advantage of this fact, oppose to the insolence of open enmity the insidious zeal of false friendship, and endeavour to give even the semblance the effect of reality, by considering those not avowedly against religion as in sincerity her friends.

Piety never did and never will thrive or become generally acceptable but under the sanction of rank and fashion. It is a most singular circumstance that there never was a time or country on earth where the highest character in the community discovered more private virtue, and all the inferior orders of men practised it less, than
with

with us. This curious contrast between the manners of the public, and those of the first magistrate, might suggest some very entertaining, and even useful speculations. Kingdoms, like individuals, derive almost all their moral and best distinctions from the example of their sovereigns; we should for that reason be the most blameless as well as the happiest people in the world. Our throne is literally established in righteousness; the decency, the dignity, the seriousness, and the sanctity of the royal deportment are objects of universal admiration, and might well be expected to arrest the imitation, or stimulate the emulation, of all. It seems equally ominous and unaccountable, both in a moral and political point of view, to see so many bad subjects under so good a prince, the worst servants controlled and directed by the best master; the most pious reign debased by the grossest vices; and the body politic constituting a monster of immorality with a heart full of the noblest purposes; and hands always in mischief, feet of the coarsest clay, and a head of the finest gold.

Into what shall we resolve an absurdity so obvious, so general, and so striking, as must shock every serious and thinking mind both at home and abroad! You whom God hath distinguished by fortune, rank, and influence, are but little aware of the ends for which these blessings are assigned you; of the duties resulting from the situation in which you are placed; of the unspeakable good which, as ministers of divine Providence, you are capacitated to produce. It is by your means the royal virtues become a visible image of the invisible Majesty of heaven, or that their influence purifies, refines, and exalts the various orders of society, as the earth receives all its beauty and fertility from the sun! You are the standard-bearers of whatever is honourable, virtuous, or godlike, in human conduct; and the cause will prosper only in proportion to your sincerity and fidelity. To you the whole kingdom of the righteous extend their

hands, and supplicate with ardent and affecting earnestness the aid of your authority. You are placed in the world as Joseph in the house of Potiphar; and your honour, like his, should be equal to your trust. All things are put into your hands and consigned to your care; and it were the foulest treachery, as well as an instance of incorrigible folly, to abuse the confidence of so indulgent a master. You are among others as mountains over vallies, and should rather screen them from the cold than seclude them from the heat. You are elevated on earth as cliffs above the sea, and should answer the purpose of watch-towers, not destructive rocks. You are friendly stars, whose office is to enlighten and direct, not malignant comets, to terrify or blast the regions below.

The person enabled by a race of illustrious ancestors, by the gracious discriminations of sovereignty, by the happy partiality of fortune, by the auspices of high birth, or by the superiority of transcendent talent, and not above the vulgar habits of immorality, must labour under a peculiar baseness of nature, imperfection of intellect, or depravity of heart. Strength of mind, rectitude of principle, dignity, elevation, and sublimity of sentiment, seem the accidents and collaterals, if not the condition, of your station. Do nothing unworthy the distinctions you enjoy, the hopes you indulge, or the homage you expect. You occupy a theatre which commands universal attention, and the animadversion which haunts your conduct is as general as the envy which accompanies your situation. All eyes are upon whatever you do; all mouths are open to censure or applaud your actions, as they accord or discord with the characters you assume. Nothing is more natural to the principles you avow, the habits you cultivate, or the expectations you raise; gives your manners a more powerful influence on life, or becomes you better; than a consciousness of what you are, what you should be, and what you may be. As therefore you would appear mutually pleasing and respectable,

respectable, the objects of sincere reciprocal approbation and well-grounded esteem, revere equally the natures you share and the advantages you inherit. By letting yourselves down to the vices of inferiors you demolish the barrier which divides you from others, keeps them at a convenient distance, and renders them subservient and obsequious to your views. In this manner the greatest among you but too often reduce yourselves to a level with the meanest, and expose the higher ranks of life to that deluge of impertinence and ribaldry which you may always expect where occasion is given by the vicious, who relinquish their dignity as troublesome, and the poor who regard your privileges as usurped.

The few moments of leisure, sobriety, and recollection, which occasionally must succeed the flutter of ceremony, festivity, dressing, gambling, and the stated rounds of fashionable dissipation, could hardly be better employed than by a serious review of your own actions, turning the edge of reflection on yourselves, and considering coolly the terms on which you are placed above others. Your duties are as manifold as they are important; and the obligations which bind you to discharge them cannot be resisted without much criminality. Your frailties and imperfections derive a magnitude and importance from the liberalities of providence, and the endowments incident to these, which render them conspicuous and remarkable. The changes which happen to an inferior planet occasion no consternation or conjecture; but an eclipse of the sun is an object of immediate and general attention. Whatever you do is marked with curiosity, and either provokes the execration, or commands the approbation, of the whole world.

A situation of rank or affluence may be considered as the great ordeal of human merit. Would you know what a man is, of what he is capable, or how he will act, invest him with greatness, make him rich, or give him power—He will instantly appear in his own proper character,

character, and wear a mask no longer than he finds it necessary. It is when flushed with honours, and intoxicated with a high reputation, in the plenitude of wealth, and the splendour of prosperity, that he is known from others, or that his virtues or vices are correctly ascertained. Who can tell how one born and bred among rags and cobwebs could acquit himself in imperial purple?—how humble he could be under every excitement to pride who is as soon in misery as in being?—how abstemious at a great feast he who never had a dinner but of herbs?—how temperate in commanding men whose reign has been hitherto confined to children. In a lowly and obscure condition the noblest virtues are rarely found; yet their lustre, like that of the setting sun, never discovers so much beauty and magnificence as in a dusky horizon or through a medium tinged with clouds. Prosperity is a veil tissued with gold by the fingers of fortune to shroud or disguise the ugliness of vice; adversity the public theatre on which virtue rears her offspring, who feed themselves with affliction as the sun with salt water. *Poverty of Spirit* amidst the greatest abundance, *humility* overwhelmed by attendants and superfluous equipage, *temperance* prompted to excess by every excitement which luxury can suggest, *moderation* in fortune without limits, or *power* without control, *composure* in scenes of general turbulence and commotion, *equanimity* in vicissitude, *patience* in tribulation, and *good-nature* under all the provocations of malignity, are exertions both of the understanding and the heart, to which few are competent; which seldom happen but on great occasions; which are never made but from the best principles and in the best hopes of that immortality which is their best reward. Individuals, who in this manner can do all they would, and yet do nothing but what is fit and right; who, in every instance, are above sacrificing the present to the future; who suffer not their appetites to riot or flutter like butterflies amidst that variety of sensual

ful objects which is most delicious and fascinating to flesh and blood, but restrain them within the bounds and enlist them on the side of modesty ; who, like a celebrated prince of antiquity, can without exultation exchange a cottage for a palace, and handle the sceptre with the same humility they held the plough ; possess a virtue of which these degenerate times are no longer worthy, which they derive not from the example of the world, but the inspiration of the Almighty ; and which borrows no lustre from pedigree or rank, but confers an inheritance and a *name better than* that of *sons and daughters*.

The example of the great possesses a most powerful and prolific influence in the production of either good or evil, and makes mankind everywhere much better or much worse. All their property, however immense, is but a gratuity, all their authority but a delegation, from God. Their habits of reserve, their numberless assumptions, and their whole demeanour, are calculated to awe the multitude, and preserve the established respectability and dignity of rank. They are consequently regarded by the vulgar as so many divinities, and with a species of homage and reverence that borders on idolatry. And the reasoning by which most people reconcile themselves to the follies and vices in fashion would have no effect but for the sceptical notions and loose lives of the great. If men, say they, who know better and are not under the same necessity with us of burying their misfortunes in debauchery ; of abandoning religion and decency for an indulgence which they cannot have but in their absence ; of cultivating habits of breaking the sabbath and of despising the worship of God ; of relinquishing all principle, and bidding defiance to all law, because they cannot afford to be honest ; are, notwithstanding, guilty of these enormities, what can be expected from us who are bribed by every thing around us to do worse, but have little or no assistance, either from our own or other's principles, to do

do better? Why should they monopolize the wickedness as well as the wealth of the world? Their minds, better instructed, are abler to see through the manifold impostures, to detect the sophistries, and to resist the impetuosity of passion, than ours. They have more at stake, must be greater losers, and, from their education and habits in life, have a clearer and readier apprehension of their risk than we, who err as much, perhaps as often, from ignorance as from depravity. We can hardly go wrong in following their steps, who are aware of the dangers to which the least deviation on the right hand or the left must expose them. Why, therefore, may we not imitate them as they imitate others? They never can mislead us but from wantonness alone, as they often enough do that without the least temptation which we are so generally unable to avoid. Though it suited our inclination, we do not always find it convenient to be good. People of fortune have constantly the means of virtue in their power; the want of these in others but too frequently drives them into the arms of vice.

It is thus the multitude find an excuse for their profligacy in that deference and homage which they owe their superiors; and in which their payment is never so prompt as when with their best interests; that the progress of iniquity is accelerated and sanctioned by their example who are best qualified to oppose it with success; and that vice, having every where erected her triumphant standard, and multiplied the trophies of her dominion and our dishonour without end, dazzles and abuses her votaries by the golden mask under which her foulest ulcers are wrapped and concealed.

But a phantom, conjured up by the gay and fashionable in modern times, assumes the dignified and hallowed name of honour, is substituted in the room of every thing holy and divine, and made the god of universal idolatry. In the world's vocabulary, or courtly dialect of the day, he is an honourable man whose debts of honour
are

are punctually discharged, though at the expense of his tradesmen, who is prodigal and profuse in the purchase of pleasure, and all alive to the instigations of revenge. So that this mighty principle, the supreme boast and distinction of an enlightened age, properly analyzed, consists only in a violent attachment to the gaming-table, inordinate indulgence in all the pursuits of sensuality, and a savage propensity for fighting: qualities which more virtuous times, which the best and greatest men that ever lived, which sound reason, which true religion, have all agreed to explode and stamp with infamy and contempt. Is it from the influence of a sentiment like this we are to look for the manly but modest virtues of the Christian life; those tender sensibilities which give us an interest in the concerns of each other; those condescensions and humilities which render us the friends and benefactors, not the foes and disturbers, of the species; all those amiable and efficient sympathies which impel us to share our enjoyments with the unfortunate, the forlorn, or the miserable? Indeed no ears are so deaf to the complaints of the wretched as theirs who are accustomed to incessant flattery, stunned by the altercation of gamblers, sated by the noise of intemperance, or distracted by the bustle and requisitions of ceremony. The man of gaiety and dissipation is a perfect churl in whatever does not contribute to his own immediate gratification. The vain man, though seldom among the first to explore the haunts of modest distress or abate the rigour of private misfortune, will endow an hospital, swell the list of any public charity, and grudge no expense to monopolize the plaudits of a moment. The man of fashion spends all, and often more than he can spare, in decorating himself for shining in the circles he frequents; and is so engrossed by company, compliment, punctilio, and personal admiration, that he has neither time nor heart to admit the claims of humanity.

Mark now the different effects of *that honour which cometh from God*, and which is the most valuable distinction of a reasonable creature. Indeed there can be no true honour which does not result from the noble faculties God bestows on man, or the disinterested actions man does for God. This, however depreciated and decried among men, is of the greatest esteem with Him who knows what we are, of what we are made, and what we can do. It does not consist in high sounding titles, which are only the *swelling words of man's vanity*; in large possessions, which so generally expose the owners; or in splendid equipage, which indicates at best pride or insignificance; but in genuine humility and lowliness of mind, singleness of heart, purity of conscience, a spotless reputation, and a good life. It delights in the performance of the kindest offices, not offices of unkindness; in condescension and complacency to all; not in haughtiness, or a lofty inattention to any; in hiding or alleviating faults where they are, not in creating or aggravating them where they are not; in allowing the little excellence which still may be found amidst great imperfection, not in blazoning the imbecilities which always tarnish the brightest virtues; in justifying even mistakes when obviously well meant, not in eagerly censuring where there is any thing to commend; in quietly minding its own duty, not in officiously interfering or meddling with that of others; in healing, not in fomenting, animosities; in being useful without noise, obliging without arrogance, and doing good for its own sake; spurning every species of profit or applause not fairly acquired, and embracing all opportunities of exercising the virtues of humanity, beneficence, and self-denial.

Infidels are no otherwise concerned in these remarks than as their principles are pernicious, in proportion as they become fashionable. A few words may therefore be indulged on what constitutes

constitutes the chief obstacle to that decency or pureness of living, which is the great object of this ADDRESS. Blasphemers of religion, by their eagerness and assiduity to render their system general, facilitate the introduction and progress of whatever is most inimical to personal probity and public decorum. The genius and industry daily prostituted on this stale disgusting topic might surely be more honourably as well as more profitably employed. Were you better acquainted with that true and venerable Christianity which the writings of the evangelists and apostles exhibit in all its native purity and simplicity, but which you ignorantly and prematurely depreciate, you would see it so full of wisdom, beauty, grace, and divinity, as must overwhelm your strongest prejudices, press it upon your constant attention and practice, and attach your hearts to its interests, as the most admirable, useful, and heavenly doctrine ever the world enjoyed. We are taught to believe many of you men of eminent abilities, strict morals, friends of mankind, and lovers of decency and order. Whence then your dislike of an institution, which, under the sanction of divine authority, and the dread of *a judgment to come*, enjoins the cultivation and exercise of every virtue which can render men easy in their own minds, and a blessing to their fellow creatures; and which is also calculated to check, to criminate, and to punish, whatever has a tendency to mar the comfort or quiet of human life?

That the gospel, while new, untried, and inimical to all the deep-rooted vices, errors, passions and prepossessions, which govern and debase the minds of men, should meet with difficulty, contradiction, and enmities of all kinds, was no more than might have been expected from the nature of the case and the temper of the world. But now that it has been so long and so generally received, the propriety and utility of its rules, approved by the experience of ages, settled by legislative wisdom and civil establishments in all

enlightened nations, and rejected only by ignorance, barbarism, bigotry, and idolatry; that it has been at issue and under discussion nearly two thousand years, stood the severest ordeal of debate, admitted all the liberty its opponents could desire, and heard and refuted every objection of the most eloquent and the most learned, both in ancient and modern times; that it has finally become an essential part of our boasted constitution, and is secured by the best laws human sagacity could devise, and even sanctioned by the most solemn oaths, tendered in the most solemn manner to our princes and magistrates; might we not fondly and modestly presume every tongue would be charmed into silence, and every pen suspended from abusing a system thus wise in its direction, thus powerful in its influence, and thus manifestly conducive to universal felicity! One would imagine it altogether incredible a religion so harmless, so orderly, and so beneficial as this, should find any enemies. Can the love of truth, zeal for the honour of God, concern for the happiness of man, or even the strongest self-interest, give any rational account of your conduct who are? Why labour so eagerly for disciples while it is so much your interest that all the rest of mankind thought and believed otherwise? What have you to supply the place of the scheme you vilify and depreciate? Is it a dark impractical theory of what is called natural religion, and which ultimately comes to no more than that every man may be left to do what he pleases? Do ye seriously think this a competent provision and security for the peace and felicity of the world? Common sense, and a prudent solicitude for present ease and convenience, should dispose you to let us alone in the calm enjoyment of a delusion so pleasing, so useful, and so indispensable, to a rational support and confidence under the various calamities of life, and all the fears of death; and to restrain the corrupt propensities and unruly passions of men from unhinging government, spurning all
authority

authority and laws human and divine; dissolving all ties of subordination and dependency; embroiling equally every department of society, and filling the whole world with violence, and uproar! How unreasonable and impious the attempt to persuade us against the conviction and practice of what combines our hopes and fears in our best interests; enjoins a worship of the divinest simplicity; and enforces, by the noblest prospects and motives, so chaste, so commanding, and so holy a system of the sublimest and most perfect morality and piety! Every wise and good man, who wishes his own or his neighbour's welfare, must condemn you, and resolve industry and zeal, thus strangely misapplied into a species of the most incorrigible obstinacy or vanity, altogether culpable and incurable. It is a consideration as terrible to you as comfortable to us who believe the gospel, that we are safe in proportion to the risk you hazard from its reality. Even supposing it to prove at last all falsehood and priestcraft, as you allege, we certainly lose nothing worth keeping. We live more happily in this world than you do, from better hopes and more enlivening prospects; our food is sweeter, our sleep sounder, all nature more charming, and death less terrible. Nor can we be in a worse situation than you, though there were not another. But, in the firm conviction of a future state of rewards and punishments, how superlatively preferable is our case to yours?

In one word, the arguments upon which we credit the gospel revelation are so fair, so rational, and so conclusive; the miracles to which it appeals are so well attested, and in their nature and circumstances so evident proofs of divine approbation; the morality it prescribes is so just and excellent, so worthy of God and beneficial to man, beyond whatever was taught before; and the marks and characters of its heavenly original are so many, and all so palpable and unimpeachable, that our grateful submission to it as the
grand

grand ordination of heaven for the recovery and salvation of a lost world, can never be imputed to us as a crime. God forbid this should be your *condemnation—that light hath come into the world, and you have chosen darkness rather than light!*

Forgive this brief attention to a class of men who do honour to no rank of life, whose tenets are always in the way of the best advice, and who have no credit or consequence from these but what are derived from the worst passions of the human heart. Avoid their company as you would that of persons infected by the plague; and regard their principles, however embellished by wit, adorned by the graces of eloquence, or disguised and made plausible by the sophistries of false reasoning, as the elements of a science, which would soon reduce society to a chaos of misery; which the worst only practise against the best, and which is the fertile source of all the villany and guilt that daily outrage every human and divine restraint. Whatever they may think of our credulity, their scepticism must be wrong, because derogatory to the best and dearest privileges of our nature, and utterly incompatible with our welfare as men and citizens!

EDUCATION.

MUCH as has been said on the religious education of youth, there is still much to say. The subject deserves peculiar importance from the interests all have in it. Our experience is the natural inheritance of our children: we have proved most of the enjoyments they pursue, been misled by the various allusions which mislead them, found much vanity and vexation in what fills them with hope, and suffered extremely from those visionary delights which dance before them in the gayest prospects, keep their little hearts in perpetual tumult, and swell their imaginations with joy. All

the compensation we can make for the errors of our past lives, for lost opportunities of doing good, for waste of time, and prostitution of talent, is to warn, with fidelity and earnestness, such as tread in our footsteps of the dangers to which they are exposed, from the hostility of every thing around them; from the eagerness with which they are apt to grasp at the tremulous vapours of present indulgence; from the fascination with which every species of vice solicits their rising affections; and, most of all, from the levity, credulity, and treachery of their own hearts.

It is our duty and our glory to do all in our power that the interests of virtue, of human nature, and of God, should be indemnified by posterity for what they must have suffered from our negligence and imperfections. Should it not be the most serious concern of our hearts, and the constant study of our lives, that our children excel in all those worthy qualities and good dispositions of which nothing now remains among us but the name? It will then be our everlasting consolation, that, though virtue and all her heavenly associates should indignantly leave the world, we have not been wanting in our humble endeavours to conciliate her attachment, to retard or postpone her departure, and even to secure her a better reception with others than she had from ourselves.

There is not a more unaccountable circumstance in the history of civil society, than that experience, the most valuable and costly of all our acquisitions, and universally deemed the best teacher and the best school, should, notwithstanding, be so little consulted in our usual plans of education, and so seldom transferred by the old to the young. This among all inferior animals is the great law by which nature hath provided for a permanent and invariable succession in the numerous instincts, habits, and specific qualities, which distinguish her several tribes. And in no case whatever are the young once observed to deviate essentially from the characteristic dis-
positions

positions of their parents. By the influence of similar principles among men, the useful and liberal arts, literature, and the sciences, are faithfully and correctly transmitted as a sacred deposit from father to son. The very errors of past generations in these respects become a fertile source of instruction and utility to posterity. Morality, the noblest, best, and only immortal distinction of man, is secured by no such establishment. The qualities of the heart seldom keep pace with those of the understanding. We are in general rather worse than better from an increase of science. Individuals, like nations, in this, as in most cases, are commonly the more profligate, and the more ingenious in vice, the more they are enlightened. Thus the experience of age might be rendered of infinite benefit to the growing faculties of youth, and their excellence in performing the various duties of life made the necessary consequence of our negligence or deficiency. The ordinary influence of bad example would then be reversed, and we should actually reform and improve in proportion to the wickedness unavoidably passing daily before us in the practice of those about us, or in that of the world at large.

Our reflections will often and readily suggest to each of us those peculiar appetites and passions which we are least disposed to resist; what those vicious inclinations and restless propensities are to which we are most addicted; and, in our whole conduct, thus coolly and impartially inspected, where the prevailing infirmity, foible, or defect of our respective character lies. Nothing can better direct us in what we owe as guardians of the rising generation, as parents, as tutors, as trustees for God and the world, to those whom a kind Providence hath consigned to our management, than a frequent and accurate review of ourselves, the principles that regulate our temper, and the motives that form and govern our manners. It is from objects which have degraded our faculties, from temptations

ations which have subdued our integrity, from professions which have abused our credulity, from sentiments which have left us a prey to the machinations of perfidy, from books, companions, spectacles, and all the numerous things which tend to entangle or dissipate, or pervert or depreciate, or impair, our rational and moral powers——we are severally and solemnly bound, by every tie, to detach and wean the tender partialities of youth.

Are we vain and giddy—the dupes and sport of the most transient passions, without principle in our actions, propriety in our deportment, or steadiness in our attachments, opinions, or preferences? Do you ever see this very common character happy, contented, respectable, or often successful; satisfied with itself, or generously contributing to the satisfaction of others? And ought we not, by all possible means, to correct or prevent such a thoughtless perversion and inquietude of temper in our offspring? Do we feel every day and every hour the pernicious consequences of trifling with the quiet, the convenience, and the comfort, of each other; with the peace of our own minds, with that harmony or concord which constitutes the supreme felicity of earth and heaven? And can we suffer those little ones, who are formed by what we are, and have no rules or directory but what they gather from our conduct and commands, to imbibe and cherish the seeds of a disposition thus desultory and distracting? Is an unruly, ill-sorted, or disorderly and turbulent state of mind, at the bottom of almost every evil that betides humanity, the source of idleness and insignificance, in such as cannot apply either body or mind from the lassitude that hangs about them, and the confusion in which they are always involved; the essence of that procrastination, or waste of time, which results from inattention to arrangement, from misplacing, mistiming, and misapplying, our respective duties and talents; the fertile origin of self-condemnation and malevolent judgment,

D

prompting

prompting to injuries without provocation, and provocation without injury; treating matters of the highest and very last importance as of none, and giving to the merest trifles an air of the most serious consequence; rendering irritable and irritating, and actually poisoning or perverting the kindest intentions of Providence in all the blessings we either expect or enjoy! And does it not highly become us to inculcate on our children habits of the most serious considerations; solid and deliberate thought, a permanent predilection for order and regularity, punctuality in action, veracity and honour in all the interchanges of civility, and the most inflexible adherence to truth and nature in whatever they do or say? All that is hollow or hypocritical, or false or base, in public or private life, is the obvious and inevitable produce of this loose, unthinking, frivolous, turn of mind. With whatever appendages of fortune, fashion, gaiety, youth, beauty, or wit, we may sometimes see it flashing in circles of dissipation, haunts of gallantry, and places of promiscuous resort, festivity, or intrigue, it is an infallible badge of insignificance, of folly, or of guilt. It wants the coolness of thought, the generosity of sentiment, the reserve of decency, the attention of wisdom, and the nerve of virtue. It has neither vigour, sincerity, or resolution. It conciliates this moment by kindness, and by unkindness kills the next. Its transitions from one extreme to another, like the variable temperature of our climate, are too sudden to be acceptable, and too eager to be safe. It abounds to-day in all that can melt and charm the affections; is tender, open, fond, and accommodating; but to-morrow chills you to the heart by its distance, its closeness, its frigidity, or its aversion. And, after all, what can be expected from a mind for ever in a flutter or a ferment, alternately the victim of a levity which admits of no check, and passions that submit to no control but peevishness of temper, inconstancy of affection,

affection, a whimsical imagination, and an incorrigible heart? As, therefore, we regard our own duty and honour, our children's credit and comfort; the peace, respectability, and prosperity, of society; and the welfare of millions yet unborn; let it be our daily business and habitual endeavour to moderate and correct their sensations and feelings, as well as improve their understandings, polish their manners, and direct their tastes.

Is it our awful misfortune, with multitudes of our fellow-creatures, to be *carnally minded*, which, in the judgment of holy writ, *is death*, or so fatally engrossed by the various objects of sense, as to have little or no apprehension of spiritual and divine things! Surely the various inconveniences and miseries, incident to such a state of darkness and uncertainty, are inconceivable and melancholy. Under this deplorable blindness of mind we can have no practical knowledge of the God of our lives, and the length of our days; of that Providence which protects us from every evil; of those laws which it is our greatest happiness to keep, and our greatest misery to break; the gratitude we owe to his mercy, or the dread we should entertain of his displeasure. Without any solid prospects beyond the present, all our hopes and fears, our acquisitions and pursuits, are narrow, groveling, and temporary. The vanities and vices of this world unavoidably exhaust the best faculties and anxieties of our natures, because our interests, our desires, and our hearts, are not in another. What advantage can we reap from the holy oracles of revelation, which armies of triumphant martyrs, in all ages, and which many of our own ancestors, in one not very remote, valued more than life, while we regard them not as the records of truth, but as the fictions of imposture? Which of us manifest any further concern for religion than her forms are in fashion? And who does not see, with regret, that her exterior, even in these dregs of times, is still indispensable to

decency, though her power and spirit no longer exist! We live independent of her precepts; we acknowledge none of her energies; and we often die without any consolation from her promises.

Most parents, however profane and dissolute themselves, as a proof of the sincerest dissatisfaction with their own conduct, are yet solicitous to see their children religious. But a system, which confers on sinful and dying creatures all the privileges of holiness and immortality, is not the mushroom of a moment, or a distinction which may be caught, like the hues of theameleon, from the proximity of every passing shade; or imbibed and retained with as much facility and correctness as an air of music by an elegant and susceptible ear—No—It is an object which the understanding comprehends only by degrees; a cause which must have time to produce its proper effects; a principle which cannot put forth all its strength at once; a habit which acquires maturity and influence by slow and gradual means. Endowments, thus valuable in their nature, thus rare and difficult of attainment, and thus essential both to the theory and practice of virtue, are, of all others, the most eligible for the pursuit and selection of young minds. Nor can their tender capacities be more happily exercised, or their growing years better laid out, than in cherishing impressions of his goodness and kind regards to whom they are indebted for all their enjoyments. Their senses and affections, while keen and tenacious, should be carefully and strenuously detached from all those gewgaws and illusions which, amidst the splendours around them, would render these impressions weak or momentary. Wherever they are, whatever they do, by whatever business or pastime amused or occupied, their passions, preferences, and oddities, should all be adapted to make them serious, to quash intemperance of mind, to suppress effervescence of passion, and to press upon their imaginations and hearts the awful realities of an invisible world, their
connexion

connexion with Providence and a judgment to come, and the infinite or endless interest which each of them has in futurity. What makes the lives of most men so destitute of principle, their intercourse with others of fairness, their transactions of equity, their opinions of reason, their thoughts of ease, or their consciences of peace, but the want of this pious and early culture? All that was serious or sacred in their education has probably been no more than a little dull, dry, or dead, formality, which then took no effect, and has since been of no use. And that which is neglected in youth we generally find is rarely obtained without a miracle in years.

Who would not wish their offspring prosperous and respectable? and where shall the requisites of such inestimable acquisitions be found but in early habits of piety, sincerity, and truth? Inspire them as soon as possible with a rational and hearty preference for these cardinal and divine virtues in all their native dignity, simplicity, and loveliness; and it will not be in the power of pride to inflame, of riches to inflate, or of pleasure in all her blandishments to inveigle, seduce, or debase their affections.

Give their curiosity a proper direction, and check not that inquisitive propensity, which marks so emphatically the object of their earliest and best inclinations. It is the genius of rising intelligence, spurning the fellowship of inferior natures, asserting its affinity with those of an higher order, and sighing for an intercourse and society more congenial and elevated. Encourage and cherish it with the same tenderness and interest you would the innocent and eager solicitude of a child bewildered among strangers, and crying for the parent it loves and has lost.

To young unformed minds just opening on things around them the whole frame of nature appears one huge inexplicable mass of deformity and incoherence. In their confused and feeble apprehensions

tions every prospect abounds with objects, and every hour teems with events, which have no adequate, no visible, cause. Excite and assist their developement of the great efficient principle or spring of whatever strikes them in this profound mysterious scene. Thus relieved from the pressure that overwhelms, and the palpable gloom which darkens and distracts their conceptions, they will be happy in proportion to the light you impart. This is the only species of knowledge which, more than all other sciences put together, will improve their hearts and expand their faculties. It is a key which unlocks all the secrets of nature; and, by tracing every thing to one supreme intelligent Original, renders the whole system at once rational and satisfactory.

Make them duly, and at all times, sensible, that the same gracious and bountiful Disposer of all good, whose omnipotent word produced the heavens and the earth, and all their respective inhabitants; whose sun refreshes our spirits by his temperate and cheerful beams, warms, enlightens, and gladdens our dwellings; whose dews and rains impregnate the earth, and cause it to bring forth food for man and beast; whose is the day in which we work, the night in which we sleep, the ground on which we tread, the air we breathe, the light we see, the winds which purify our atmosphere, the waters which quench our thirst, the fire which produces universal animation, and all the qualities of all the elements of things; who rescued their feeble frames while struggling on the verge of existence from the darkness and debility in which nature enclosed them, and brought them forth in soundness and safety to the light of life; who preserved them from being strangled in the birth, or smothered in the cradle, deformed by the contingencies incident to a state of immature organization, or marred in the harmony of either body or mind by the malignity of disease. His goodness saved them from multitudes of dangers, which without his kind paternal

paternal care must have closed their eyes as soon as they were open, and dispatched them to another world the moment of their entrance into this. His arm protects them against all the ills and perils of unthinking infancy, nor once abandons their interest or their lives to the wayward footsteps of nonage and youth. It is from him they have their pleasures, their necessities, their conveniences, their luxuries, and their all. Whatever they possess here, or hope for hereafter, is his. The plentiful table, the full cup, sound health, an easy mind, the heart to relish, and the hand to diffuse, the bounty that feeds them, are all equally and exclusively from him. His providence upholds them in all their goings, his grace supplies their wants, and his mercy pardons their infirmities. By his kindness they are kept in the land of the living; by his Son they are freed from the wrath to come; by his Spirit they are sanctified and in his favour, which is better than life, all their noblest, best, and sublimest, expectations, both in this and another world, ultimately terminate.

Notwithstanding all the senseless merriment and criminal farcism of licentious wit, the blasphemy of scepticism, the fascinating rage of impious example, and the rash and stupid confidence so generally, so implicitly, and so madly put in the maxims of worldly wisdom; a firm practical conviction of these important truths, in all their various connexions, associations, and dependencies, is the sole spring of whatever is truly great, honourable, and disinterested, in the nature and deportment of man. Blessed are those children, on whose panting and ductile bosoms this holy, amiable, and lovely impress of supreme benignity and grace is faithfully and fairly delineated! Their beauty, improvements, and perfections, unlike the visionary embellishments of fashion, which levity and affectation lavish on the body; which, having no end but shew, are transitory as unsubstantial; and which, from the fever that prefers them,

them, and the frenzy that they produce, are infallible symptoms of a diseased mind; are intellectual and moral, pure in their nature, and in their effects certain, salutary, and permanent. Endowments thus precious and desirable, conferred by reason, and sanctioned by religion, will flourish in the paradise of God, when all that dazzles and deludes the graceless votaries of empty and ostentatious gaiety expires. It is the qualities of the mind, the improvements of the understanding, the virtues of the heart, which constitute the primary objects of a manly and liberal tuition, which contribute to present excellence and future glory; which keep our passions moderate and our hopes alive; which alleviate the evils we feel by the anticipation of what we wish, and even subdue the fears of death by that immortality we have in view. Their lustre will not only outshine the *lilies of the field*, with which Solomon in all his glory was not to be compared, but actually survive all that is pleasing to the eye or the ear; all the charms of nature and all the creations of fancy.

Parents, guardians, governors, teachers, and all who have any concern, or take any interest, in the pleasing but arduous task of raising, improving, and calling into life and action, the latent powers of our nature, are under strong and peculiar obligations to season all their instructions with religion. Were such a tuition as this in fashion, our youth would literally be like a well-watered garden. Give piety to their hearts, purity to their principles, and disinterestedness to their actions; and leave superiority in every species of embellishment to such as know no better and aim no higher. Excellence in these various, exalted, and rare, attainments, is a distinction so honourable and so substantial, as it were madness to expect from all the ornaments which letters, the sciences, and even the graces combined, can confer. Indeed nothing we can teach or they can learn is of any consequence when put in competition

tition with the knowledge of God. Acquaint them, as soon as their minds are capable of information, with all the great Bible-facts, and the plain essential doctrines of Christ and his apostles. Lay before them, in short explicit and familiar terms, the radical principles and leading duties of the Christian life; and, by every motive you can urge, rouse them to an early practice, as well as a firm belief, of the gospel. Replenish their young hearts, while yet soft and tender, unbiassed, unoccupied, and impressible, by truths of superlative excellence, interests of the last consequence, and principles of the best tendency. Fix their growing attentions habitually and earnestly on the benign Sovereign of all worlds, as the Judge and witness of their whole behaviour, their merciful Governor, their kind Preserver, their gracious Parent; as the God in whom they live and move, by whose power, and for whose pleasure, they are both made and redeemed, as their best guardian, their best benefactor, and their best friend. Inspire them with an habitual reverence and regard for every thing serious, divine, and sacred, in thought, word, and deed. Restrain, by all the vigilance and circumspection you can at any time command, their indulging, irregular, whimsical, affected, or worthless inclinations; and accustom them as much as possible, to the amiable habit of restraining themselves. Remove from their observation, or place beyond their reach, whatever is most likely to pollute their hearts, anticipate their feelings, inflame their passions, or even vitiate and abase their taste. Train them up in the knowledge, the preference, the love, and the practice, of all that is truly good, virtuous, and honourable, among men, under a permanent conviction of an awful responsibility at last, for the numerous advantages they enjoy, the faculties they possess, and the opportunities put in their power, of qualifying themselves for the service of God, of society, and of one another.

E

Then

Then shall you acquit yourselves with fidelity to heaven, to your country, and to your own consciences, of the trust you have accepted. And the beneficent effects of obligations, thus sacredly discharged, will spread far, strike deep, and last long. The good qualities and worthy principles with which young minds are impregnated, constitute the best security for their faithful transmission to future ages, and prove universal benefits to society from generation to generation *while sun and moon endure*. By the divine blessing on your pious endeavours, a solid foundation for this great and good work will however be laid, as the children whom Providence devolves on your care will come forth into the world shielded and armed in some degree against the contagion of vicious example, superior to temptation, adequate to the duties, fit to make a proper use of the blessings, and not unprepared for the sufferings, of life. And, long after your labours of love on earth are finished to your own satisfaction, the rewards for having acted your part so well will be happily realized, your crowns will brighten, and your joys multiply in heaven!

FAMILY DEPARTMENT.

In the infancy of Christianity it was decreed by Constantius the emperor, that all, who would not renounce the faith, should be divested of their civil honours and employments. You may conceive the consequence of such a proclamation by what might be expected from a similar one among ourselves. The herd of mercenary parasites, who preferred the enjoyments of the present to all the hopes of the future, was prodigious. A few there were, however, whom no threats could awe, no promises bribe, to relinquish that glory which crowns *a patient continuance in well-doing*. Having by this stratagem detected the impudent impostor from the
real

real Christian, the emperor published another edict, banishing all hypocrites from his dominions, on the wise allegation, that “ they “ could never be true to him who were false to God.”

The maxim which suggested this expedient is quite as applicable to domestics as to subjects. Such as are accustomed to betray their Maker will hardly serve his creatures with more fidelity. It is upon the choice, the management, and the usage of these, your patience and attention, who have the honour or hope to be masters and householders, is now solicited. An address to you on so interesting a subject is the more proper and likely to succeed, as you cannot but feel the inconvenience that occasions it; as there are none of you who do not wish a redress in a grievance which has now become general; and as you are not only men, but Christians, whose natures should be refined, whose passions should be regulated, whose hearts should be enlarged, by the truths you believe and the hopes you indulge. Whatever the fashion of the times, the power of bad habits, or the profligacy of loose companions, may suggest, you cannot but be sensible and conscious, whenever you think seriously on the matter, that you are all and severally answerable to the great Master of the universe for your conduct to those who, in all important respects, are your equals; who have the same feelings to consult, and the same souls to be saved; and who, on the most interesting considerations, are as dear to him as you can be.

It would seem, from every aspect of society, especially in the metropolis and its environs, that housekeepers, for the most part, are but little aware of the nature and extent of their duty to inferiors, what manifold advantages depend upon the faithful discharge of it, and the infinite and multifarious mischief involved in its omission. We are all sensible enough of their faults; of the nameless inconveniences and improprieties their inattention, carelessness,

lessness, or criminality, occasions; of the vices to which most of them are addicted; and of the qualities we wish them to possess. Is it not in almost every family the common complaint, that they have no attachment, fidelity, or gratitude; that the single principle, upon which they uniformly act, is a settled preference of their own interest, their own maxims, and even their own pleasures, to yours; and that the only sympathy, which unites and governs, and runs through the whole order, is never to forgive you either for your dependance or their superiority.

Such is the flagitious system upon which the present servitude of this country stands and erects a crest equally ominous to private tranquillity and public decency. And they never had servants, or never conceived a correct idea of what they generally are, who can think of them more favourably, or give them, in strict justice, a better character.

The consequences of this glaring and alarming evil, properly estimated, will be found no trivial deduction from domestic felicity. They are felt, acknowledged, and deplored, by all; yet all have the remedy in their own hands. Would you know the cause, as the most probable means of preventing an effect you have so much reason to apprehend, trace your own vices to the vicious example of superiors; and it is an inference, which cannot but strike you, that whatever is most reprehensible in your dependants or inferiors, can originate no where but with you. Bad servants seldom make bad masters; but it generally happens that good servants degenerate under masters not so good as themselves.

Servants are so natural a part of the family that their manners form no indecisive index of the management which prevails in it. Observe but the different reception of necessitous suitors at the doors of the affluent or noble. The civility or rudeness, humanity or cruelty, of the owner, is generally apparent enough to an intelligent

telligent eye in the face or demeanour of the porter. It is his master's feelings, rather than his own, which render him complaisant or forbidding, affable or repulsive, accommodating or insolent. He is seldom distant where his master is familiar, shy where he is frank, or contumelious to such as have any share in his condescension.

Servants are mere articles of equipage, and have as much attention paid their exterior as any other part of a splendid sideboard or superb furniture. The tallest and best made are generally preferred; and most people hesitate at no expense to decorate and adorn them. The valet struts in as full a suit, a head as well dressed, clothes as richly laced and scented, and a manner as starch and lofty, as his lord. Her ladyship's maid at the same time flounces in volumes of drapery as sumptuous, in silks of as great value, in trinkets as brilliant and as fashionable, in perfumes as sickly and profuse, as any dutchess. All this excessive and superlative finery is lavished on creatures as completely uninformed as the stocks of which Pagans carve their wooden gods, the wax or blocks which constitute the gewgaws of a toyshop, or the boards of which publicans form their gilded sign-posts.

Even, when their *occupation* of parasites and pimps is over, they cease to be tools, but continue apes of their master's vices. Their luxuries are at an end, but the habits of slander acquired in the drawing-room, the blasphemy imbibed in the hall, and the frauds witnessed at the gaming-table, are by no means laid aside with their liveries. These are the acquisitions which render the discarded domestics of great families such a constant and powerful accession to that alarming system of knavery and depredation which the lower orders, especially in the metropolis, carry on against all who are higher, richer, or better, than themselves. It is principally in the kitchens and halls of these houses, where no bounds

are

are set to animal indulgence of any kind, that we perceive what monsters of insignificance, lewdness, and depravity, high-living and little work make of ignorant and low minds. These are the sources which incessantly deluge the town with prostitutes, our streets with pickpockets, our highways with robbers and footpads, our prisons with felons, our gibbets and drops with malefactors.

Left our servants should not be sufficiently corrupted, and made useless and worthless by indulgence, we often debase ourselves to a sordid imitation not of what the best should be, but of what the worst are. That our men and women of fashion should be ambitious of appearing, both in dress and diversion, jockies and Abigails, is not only mean and gross, but a palpable demonstration of their extreme folly who can stoop to a competition in which they must be worsted. There may be some humour, and even genius, in mimicking the absurdities of a pampered menial in the manly exercises of the whip, managing a high-mettled courser, or directing with skill the rapid evolutions of a carriage—but who does not pity the younger branches of those families in which the master intrigues with the maids, and the mistress with the footmen!

Nor does the caprice of fashion promise any alteration for the better. What invention or improvement of late years in equipage or domestic economy has not facilitated the encroachment of our servants on our ease and indolence! “ Our coaches are made
 “ uneasy, but light, that they may whirl us along with the utmost
 “ rapidity for their own amusement. Glasses before are laid aside,
 “ and we are immured in the dark, that the coachman may no
 “ longer be under our inspection, but be drunk or sleep without
 “ any observation: family liveries, because badges of servility, which
 “ might give information to whom their wearers belonged, and to
 “ whom complaints might be addressed of their enormities, are laid
 “ aside. By their carelessness and idleness they have obliged us to hire

“ all our horses ; and so have got rid of the labour of looking after
 “ them. By their impositions on the road they have forced us
 “ into post-chaises, by which means they are at liberty to travel
 “ by themselves, as it best suits their own ease and convenience.
 “ By their impertinence, which we have not patience to endure,
 “ nor resolution to repress, they have reduced us to dumb waiters ;
 “ that is, to wait upon ourselves ; by which means they have
 “ shaken off the trouble and condescension of attending us. By
 “ their profusion and mismanagement in housekeeping they have
 “ compelled us to allow them board-wages, by which means they
 “ have obtained a constant excuse to loiter at public houses, and
 “ money in their pockets to squander there, in gaming, drunkenness,
 “ and extravagance. The last of these is an evil of so gigantic a
 “ size, so conducive to the universal corruption of the lower part
 “ of this nation, and so entirely destructive of all family order,
 “ decency, and economy, that it well deserves the consideration
 “ of a legislature, who are not themselves under the influence of
 “ their servants, and can pay them their wages without any in-
 “ convenience.”

Such are some of the various ways by which the depravity of
 servants has of late become so prevalent and portentous in this
 country. What a difference would a little more circumspection
 in our own conduct produce in theirs ! Blame not them till conscious
 that you are yourselves blameless. Walk before them in the paths
 of uprightness. Never appear in their sight but as the friends and
 admirers of whatever is fair and honourable. Exhibit no qualities
 at home, or in your families, which would make you blush abroad
 or out of them. Keep all your strongest feelings and passions as
 much as possible under the guidance and control of decency and
 propriety. Make all the allowance for theirs you would reason-
 ably wish for your own. Excuse and forgive their infirmities in
 perfect

perfect confidence of the divine assurance, that, in proportion as you forgive others, you will yourselves be forgiven. In every transaction, more especially with servants, maintain the most inviolable regard for truth. Be temperate in your pleasures, honourable in your dealings, sacred in keeping your word; not rash in making, never guilty in breaking, a promise; slow to anger, apt to forgive, cool in action, collected in difficulty, resigned in affliction; not frothy, proud, or volatile, in prosperity; not melancholy in adversity; not curious to descry faults where they are not, or to aggravate them where they are; cheerful without levity, polite without art, and affable without meanness. Servants, impressed and controlled by a carriage thus comely and consistent, will soon either love or leave you, relinquish your family, or reform their own conduct, avoid the view of a goodness that must confound them, or mend their manners by an imitation of yours.

Great, incessant, and universal, has been the clamour for a new police. A rage for novelty, like other passions, often transports men beyond the bounds of moderation, and sometimes renders them tired of the best institutions. From the reduction of felony to a system, the daring and numerous depredations every where made upon property, the precarious security we enjoy even in our own habitations, the multitudes constantly dragged to justice as sheep to the slaughter, and the horrid traffic sanctioned by a semblance of legality that is made of human innocence and human life; magistracy is sunk into contempt for its lethargy, religion for its gravity, and law for its impotence. Let but masters, heads of families, housekeepers, parents, tutors, and all who are armed by nature, by God, or by man, with any species of authority or influence, exert it conscientiously and impartially, and the duty of magistrates will be made easy, the laws recover their wonted energy and empire; and even religion, degraded and neglected, as
the

the long has been, exert her useful and benign tendency, send forth *her healing virtues through the land*, and diffuse among all ranks just principles, sound morals, comfort within doors, and decency without.

Such is the miserable condition of our species that the many are universally condemned to perpetual labour for the better accommodation of the few. Our exigencies multiply as our circumstances improve; and most people, in any degree of affluence, require as much attendance and nursing as infants or invalids all their days. For the etiquette of living in style is to be waited upon by those who are too lazy and too proud, and have too much time to wait upon themselves, to do as little as possible for ourselves, and nothing at all for others.

Servants are not merely a necessary appendage to polished life, but a source of the greatest convenience we enjoy. Without them how many of us were a burthen to ourselves, and to all whose happiness makes us happy! Our wants, our luxuries, and our whims, render them indispensable. They give us their time, their health, and their strength; and often minister to our ease and pleasure at the expense of their own. Their situation, so near our persons, so essential in our arrangements, puts us at all times much in their power, by inducing us to treat them with a certain degree of confidence, by making them stationary witnesses of our frailties, and by impressing them with a belief of our dependence for most indulgencies on their assiduity. When at the greatest distance from relations and friends, their attachment, assistance, and condolence, are always at hand, and often peculiarly soothing and acceptable; for emergencies there are, in the most fortunate and tranquil lives, which render the care and attention of faithful domestics one of our best blessings. Are we not consequently bound, by all the ties of gratitude, to repay, in the most liberal manner we can, these in-

luable obligations? It is our duty, and it ought to be our practice and our pride, to make them better, by our service, in proportion as it is the means of making us happier. Do they not save us much trouble by supplying our wants? And may we not prevent them a world of misery by enlightening their minds, and improving their hearts? It were madness to form any connexion with such as we dare not trust; yet in this precarious and distressing predicament our persons and properties are inevitably placed while our servants are unprincipled and uninformed. How many instances are incessantly occurring, in the worthiest families, of prodigality and treachery, where fidelity and honour alone were expected! Is it not a fact, equally notorious and alarming, that most burglaries, which stain the calendars of public justice, are occasioned by a blind precipitant confidence in servants who have no care, no conscience, and, often enough, no character?

Who is not aware how much good servants improve most of our domestic conveniences, what we suffer for the want of them, how seldom they are found, and with what difficulty kept? No wonder a circumstance, thus auspicious to the comfort of families, should be an object of such eager and general solicitude. It lessens almost every species of care which presses hardest on a feeling mind; gives facility and effect to all the regulations of economy; and is one of those springs on which most depends in the various evolutions of domestic mechanism. Then every one performs their respective duty, and is accommodated by the best of all earthly blessings, heart's ease; mutual confidence produces its usual complacency and good-humour; all the social virtues revive and diffuse the feelings, the smiles, and the graces of kindness, innocence, and affability; and the harmony of candour and sincerity triumphs in the absence of envy, jealousy, suspicion, and all their sinister and base associates. What a mortifying characteristic of our common nature,
that,

that, with happiness always at hand and at home, we struggle so much, and go so far, to be miserable!

Who would not wish so happy a revolution extended beyond the narrow limits of a family, and that the whole world were thus blessed! And there cannot certainly be a better expedient for effecting a general reformation than by correcting the lives and mending the manners of individuals. Surely mankind would be both wiser and happier were the majority of them more tractable and virtuous! But the fountain cannot be pure while the springs that supply it are muddy. Dependants in this populous and polished place, including journeymen, apprentices, day-labourers, menials, and domestics of every description, constitute at least two thirds of the whole inhabitants. What have we not to dread from the profligacy of so prodigious a multitude, to whom nothing comes amiss but their duty; nothing is infamous but what keeps them out of place; nothing criminal but what cannot be concealed or subjects them to punishment? Whence but from this fertile source of mischief feuds and animosities among neighbours; frequent depredations in families; the memorable riots which but a few years ago had almost involved the whole town in one awful conflagration; and what, perhaps, is more than any other mortal calamity, the shocking depravity of the rising generation? These, and innumerable disorders and enormities of a less obvious but still more odious description, are all unavoidable consequences of masters without principle and families without discipline.

The benefit, both public and private, which the fidelity and worth of so large a body of people would infallibly occasion, infinitely exceeds our most sanguine expectations. It would be such an accession to the general stock of virtue as must equally produce security at home and respectability abroad. The object, in whatever light you view it, is at least of magnitude enough to sanction, to excite,

and to interest your warmest endeavours. It is not only snatching firebrands from the hands of madmen and those on whom, under Heaven, the preservation even of your lives and properties depends; but, by providing for an immediate and absolute renunciation of all your own vices, the best means of establishing the most substantial happiness both here and hereafter.

How then shall we command so eminent an advantage to society, to families, and to individuals? That wantonness of speculation, which affects and abuses whatever interests the human heart, riots with more than usual licentiousness on this subject. Extravagant lenity or indulgence to servants is only not so odious and unpopular as extreme severity. The effects of both, however, are nearly the same. You may well debase yourselves to their level, but can seldom or never raise them to yours. Their minds are as uncultivated, and may as easily and as soon be ruined by pampering, as those of children. They will take liberties in proportion as you slacken the reins of government; and no fury is more unmanageable, no rage more dangerous, than vulgarity, ignorance, and affectation, intoxicated or run mad. Every thing and every creature are wrong and wretched, useless, and even mischievous, out of place. There is no species of hypocrisy more cruel or pernicious in common life than the mere cant of humanity. And in this, especially, it is now the fashion, more than ever, where there is the least of the substance to make the greatest shew, and to compensate for the destitution of virtue by the most hyperbolical pretensions.

There are, however, many degrees between too much humanity and none. Among the ancients masters were invested with the power of corporeal correction over all their dependants. This odious and absurd authority can never be revived, or even desired, among us, but at the dreadful expense both of justice and of decency.

cency. To make servants good, it is not necessary that masters should be either tyrants or monsters: and surely it is with little probability he can expect to retain any degree of control over the passions of others, who indulges his own to excess.

Well were it for society, and for all men, that every one could be king, priest, and prophet, among his own domestics. Most are ready enough to claim the honour and privileges of the first character, but few are equally careful to discharge the obligations of the other two. Why do we not recollect that the indignities done to the honour and authority of God in our families, while we endeavour not to reclaim such as are under our inspection, will be justly imputed to our negligence, and the iniquities of our houses may be visited upon ourselves! Did you see a blind man sauntering about the brink of a precipice, and gave him no warning; or though within reach of a person swept down by a torrent, and afforded him no relief; or while present at an eruption of fire, and alarmed not the neighbourhood;—not all these instances of criminal negligence, either severally or combined, were half so barbarous as inattention to servants both in principles and morals. A few moments, at most, would put an end to the sufferings of the former, and the hasty process of such accidents leaves no time to work upon our feelings; but the miseries of the latter are without measure and without end. They are consigned to your care and tuition by his sovereign appointment to whom you are responsible for their degeneracy or improvement. From the omission of what is your duty, perhaps by the influence of your example, they may often enough be ruined. And it is a consideration immaterial indeed to them, but to you of infinite moment, that the ruin of masters is frequently involved in that of servants.

Your duty, whatever the fashion may be, is, by all you can do or say, by advice, by authority, and by example, to acquaint and impress

impress your servants with theirs. All that fortune has put in your power cannot enable you to serve them more essentially than by attaching them more firmly to their stations, and qualifying them to fill them better. The head of a family, thus distinguished by manliness of deportment and holiness of life, is actually the friend, the guide, the comforter, of the whole. They see and are struck with what their conduct should be, from a constant observation of his. He exhibits daily the most valuable, the most useful, and the most charming, of all domestic pictures—a lively transcript of true worth, enlivened with traits of cheerful piety, genuine honour, and innocent gaiety. It is a family piece; and though, with a very few illustrious exceptions, seldom found in the galleries of the great or the cabinets of the curious, often gives beauty and charms to the homeliest cottage: and the family who has it not, however rich, splendid, powerful, or respected, had better be without fortune or friends, or honours, and even *sell all to buy this pearl of great price*. Bad servants will either be awed and repulsed, or allured and amended, by the presence of so much goodness. His business is never slighted, as the diligence of his servants is essentially rewarded by the share they have in his confidence. His indulgence is never abused, as they know it will never be impaired while they do their duty. His commands are never evaded, as he does by them in every thing as he would have them do by him. Under him they feel no authority but reason; act from no motive but love; apprehend no punishment but the consequences of their own folly. He makes it a point of honour to embrace every opportunity of pressing on their attentive and deliberate consideration all those arguments and truths which tend to enlighten their understandings, moderate their passions, reconcile them to a dependent condition, and make them in love with an honest conduct and a fair reputation. He directs their wills by the hopes and fears of religion, and
keeps

keeps their consciences awake and tender by its sanctions. He fortifies them against the corrupt and vicious maxims which they imbibe from each other, and demonstrates, both in word and deed, that morality is generally worthless in proportion as it is pliable; and that the principles of human conduct are never so firm, so pure, so elevated, as when most unaccommodating. Folly and knavery are unstable and temporary; but truth and goodness, like their Divine Author, never change and never die. The virtuous habits he thus inculcates and discloses in all the relations of life excite their liveliest emulation; enlarge, improve, and captivate their hearts. They live with him, under him, and for his interest, on terms of reciprocal respect and cordiality. *His yoke*, like that of his heavenly Master, *is easy and his burthen is light*. How pleasing! how profitable! But, alas! how very rare must that service be which is founded in his kindness for them and their gratitude to him. It is by this omnipotent law, this supreme energy in the heart of man, they find themselves impelled to do every thing they can for him and his, whose bread they eat, whose wages they receive, and whose patronage they enjoy. Is it any wonder they feel and avow a serious and habitual interest in all his concerns! His will is the great rule of their lives; and they are happy and blessed in the pleasure he takes in their welfare, the honour of his approbation, and the benefit of his example.

For the reverse of this eminent and engaging character we can all but too easily consult the original. It may strike the less that we see it so seldom, and we not unfrequently like those things best with which we are most familiar. We complain loudly, generally, and perhaps justly, that we are ill served; that some servants are fraudulent, perfidious, and dishonest; others insolent; many idle; and almost all careless, selfish, and worthless. But does not the very nature of the evil point out the remedy? By what means are they

so abandoned? Is it not that their education, their habits, their lives, which are often but a servile transcript of yours, have not a shade of holiness in them; that they are without the common maxims and resources of integrity and candour; that they have no other prospect or hope than what depends upon the present; and that they derive no expectations or motives, or comforts, from a spiritual or future world? And is it by such weapons as these they can baffle the temptations to be encountered in a state of servitude? Alas! what afflictions so light, what pains so easy, what drudgeries so trivial, as under these circumstances may not feel excessive and intolerable! But once convince them that the great and terrible God sees all their actions, and searches out the thoughts and intentions of their hearts; that no covering can hide, no place detach them from his presence or his sight; and that he is the constant witness of whatever they do or wherever they go; make them sensible how much they depend upon his providence for health and strength; what satisfaction results from a steadfast confidence in his mercy; how little they can do without his aid: inspire them with a strong and practical belief of the divine government; impress their hearts with a constant apprehension of the world to come, and the peculiar obligations of duty and of gratitude they are under both to earth and heaven; lay before them the evidence, and explain the nature, of the gospel; interest them in its blessings, and reconcile them to its conditions; give them a principle of faith and holiness—and they will be the same out of your sight as under your eye; deem themselves accountable to God for their conduct to you; make no exceptions in relinquishing all their own pleasures and preferences for yours; and, instead of presuming to select only what duties are most easy or best suited to their convenience and inclination, do the least as well as the greatest from the single impulse of sincerity and conscience. The

The moment they are real Christians you will have faithful servants, and the public good and quiet subjects.

Without these qualifications, sound and seasonable instruction, good company, and a perfect pattern of what they should be, it would be madness to expect them other than they are. Perhaps they seldom hear of God or religion but in the ribaldry of a frothy or wanton conversation; are here corrupted by the loose lives, and there debauched by the libertine principles, of their betters; in one place made accomplices in fraud, in another emissaries of intrigue, in a third the vehicles of slander or malignity, and almost every where meet with an awful, unaccountable, and epidemical contempt for spiritual and eternal things. When they observe so many, who they justly consider must know better than themselves, habitually absent from every place of worship; when some grudge them but a few hours to do homage to the great Father of all; when others ridicule religion in their presence, and convince them by their conduct that they neither believe its truths nor honour its institutions; and when almost all leave them in gross ignorance of the gospel, without God, and without Christ, faithless, hopeless, and graceless, deprived of whatever keeps the affections pure, the passions cool, the conscience tender, and a sense of duty alive in the heart; it would be one of the greatest miracles ever the world saw to find them better! We owe it to the providence of heaven, to the restraining grace of God, to his unseen but powerful protection, who *keeps us in the hollow of his hand*, that they are not worse, that your confidence is not more signally abused, and that their extreme profligacy does not combine and tempt them to some general outrage. Every instance of imprudence, of irreligion, of indecency, or of want of principle in you, is the more impressive and infectious, that it is always before their eyes, that it is enforced by the reverence due to station and authority, that it is

G

gradually

gradually copied with a view to conciliate your affections by a conformity to your sentiments and manners, and that it acquires facility and vigour from an inclination prevalent in all ranks to emulate their superiors. It is by seeing you affront your Master in heaven, in slighting his mercies, dishonouring his name, despising his institutions, and spurning his laws, that encourage them to be insolent to their masters on earth. Because you prostitute the sabbath, they mis-spend the week. Because you are intemperate, they go into every *excess of riot*. Because you defraud others, they steal from you. Because your conduct is without honour, they are perfidious. The slander, obscenity, and blasphemy, which rage in the dining-room, are vented in the kitchen. There, and every where, they transcribe your foibles and vices with fidelity; and, though they serve you as basely as they can, dishonour you not half so much as you do the *God of your lives and the length of your days*.

GRATITUDE.

Let me now conclude this ADDRESS by an earnest appeal to the feelings of parents, heads of families, and people of rank and fortune, on the chief scope and sum of all that has been urged. *If you are made*, as the poet speaks, *of penetrable stuff*; if bad company, bad example, and bad habits, have not already depraved you beyond recovery; if you have any warmth in your natures, any generosity in your hearts, any fire in your passions, it will be impossible to think or reason seriously on your peculiar interest and share in the bounties and benevolences of Heaven, and not acquit yourselves with the gratitude of sincere Christians, of good men, and of useful citizens.

PARENTS!

PARENTS! How many tender anxieties, endearing relations, and interesting distinctions, meet in this honourable appellation! It is elegantly said, that “ celibacy, like a flie in the heart of an apple, dwells in sweetness, but dwells alone; is in habitual confinement, and dies, as it lived, in sadness and solitude; but that divine institution which sanctifies the paternal character, like the useful bee, builds a house and gathers honey from every flower; and labours and unites into bodies and empires; and sends out colonies, and feeds the species with delicacies; enacts laws, maintains order, exercises many virtues, and promotes many interests; and is, upon the whole, that state of good things to which God hath designed the present constitution of the world.” Parents occupy in the body politic functions somewhat similar to those of the heart in the animal system. All that life and motion, and vigour, which give circulation to the fluids, pulsation to the arteries, and tone to the nerves, originate with this primary organ of sensation. And there is certainly nothing desirable or transcendent among the numerous comforts and privileges of social life, which you, who are parents, are not one way or other the means of conferring. What soils are to plants, roots to trees, or fountains to streams, you are, by the blessing of God, to the world. In fact, it is you who support, replenish, and keep it alive. It hangs upon you, as literally as the fruit does upon its parent stock, for sap and nourishment; and without constant supplies, derived from you, the whole race would languish and insensibly diminish, like the produce of those boughs which are blighted, or which prematurely wither and decay. All the numerous and affecting breaches which disease, or time, or the grave, repeatedly makes in families and societies, it is your distinguished province to repair. And soon would the happiest and best revolutions be effected in every nation on earth, were these liberal and stated accessions to the general stock of population properly qualified for discharging the duty of worthy citizens.

Thus important and respectable is the station of parents in all political associations. They are the direct channels of every advantage population effects; the great origin of all the honours and dignities which individuals arrogate or enjoy from the preference, the partiality, the justice, or the interest, of one another; the first link in that immense and complicated chain which involves all the various relations of civilized life, and knits the species together. Their capacity in the great scale of being may consequently be styled the mother of the world, as it creates families, preserves kingdoms, fills cities and churches, peoples both earth and heaven, and might, by the influence of good example, prove an infallible introduction to private happiness and public utility. The man who could raise but one blade of grass where there is none, has been wisely esteemed a more liberal benefactor to mankind than the conqueror of nations, or the ruler, who is often enough the tyrant and scourge of empires. And whoever has the good fortune of adding to that society, where Providence hath ordered his lot, but one useful member or worthy citizen, confers on his country and the species an obligation which the produce of no capacity, however superlative, no property, however immense, no rank, however elevated, can equal.

One of the most celebrated princes of all antiquity congratulates the parents of a numerous progeny in strains of peculiar energy and justness. *Children, says he, are an heritage of the Lord, and the fruit of the womb is his reward. As arrows are in the hands of a mighty man, so are children of the youth. Happy is the man who bath his quiver full of them. They shall not be ashamed, but subdue his enemies in the gate.* He attributes children entirely to the gift of God, and pronounces those happiest who have most. He deems every child an accession to the consequence, the safety, and the prosperity of all; and estimates the merit of parents by the number
and

and worth of their offspring. What is a family but a group of friends united in one indissoluble league, not by the common bands of expedient or necessity, but by the great law of nature—a tie paramount to all the inventions of art, and more impulsive and permanent than even the instincts of society!

Many, indeed, and various are the cares and inquietudes which multiply with our offspring; but these are the cares and inquietudes not of avarice or ambition, but of nature and of love. And, though they do keep our tenderest sensibilities always awake, and often produce a momentary vexation, they are never accompanied either by the tear of repentance or the pang of remorse. Virtuous industry wonderfully mitigates their severity; Providence is seldom wanting where parents are neither prodigal in spending nor remiss in acquiring the means of subsistence; and children are never so difficult to bring up in the best as in the worst habits, under a moral and religious as under a loose and undisciplined tuition. It is in the power of but few, who have large families, to provide for their luxuries and their vices, but all may promote the improvement of their hearts; and, though they cannot give them fortunes, may give them what is better—active habits and good principles. And surely no success in life can yield any satisfaction so substantial, so lasting, or so grateful, to all the feelings and views of a good mind, as the consciousness, in whatever we do for them, of having uniformly preferred the cultivation of those qualities which constitute the happiness, perfection, and immortality of their natures.

Some of the most illustrious nations, in ages of unexampled science and celebrity, invested parents with a species of despotism over their respective families. It was chiefly by regulating the exercise of paternal authority that they preserved the simplicity of their laws, kept their numerous households in order, and provided
for

for internal peace and such an unanimity as is the broadest and firmest basis of general felicity. They secured a succession of good citizens by making good sons, and thought it unlikely that he should command well abroad who knew not how to obey at home.

It is recorded of an Asiatic father, that he brought one of his sons fettered to the famous Artaxerxes, soliciting that the prince would forth with command him to be slain. The king asked, with surprise, whether he could find in his heart to see his son put to death? 'In my garden,' said the father, 'grows a beautiful lattice, healthy, wanton, and full of leaves. When any of these acquire such a strength and luxuriance as proves injurious to the rest, my duty impels me to make a sacrifice of one to the welfare of the whole; and the moment it is gone they begin to thrive. This, O king! is an emblem of my family. The boy, in these ignominious shackles, is so ill an example to his brothers that his life may render them the worst, but his death the best, subjects in all your majesty's dominions.'

Such was the patriotism of antiquity!—stern, but disinterested; cruel in its means, but merciful in its ends; above the weakness, but alive to all the best movements, of the human heart; cultivating private only as conducive to public good; and shrinking from no evil, however near, or exquisite, or great, which promised the production of general utility. Divest this venerable and potent energy of its original ferocity; instead of the gloomy superstition of Paganism inspire and sanction its operations by the glorious principles of divine revelation; and, rescuing its hopes from the doubts and deceptions of a visionary philosophy, build them on the promises of the gospel; and you will find it an infallible antidote to that general dissoluteness of manners which is the opprobrium of the times. You will then tend the gradual development of your children's minds, the expansion of their hearts, and the direction of their passions,

passions, with an anxiety not neglectful of the present, but provident of the future. Your houses will be seminaries of what the public most wants in her servants—sound heads and true hearts; and the more virtuous individuals you make, the more good you will do. By multiplying securities for the reputation of others, you will raise and establish your own. You will furnish better, trustier, and harder, subjects than either the laws or the manners of the country. You will become the best representatives of God upon earth; who, though he might command our love by his bounty, attaches our natures still more strongly to his service by the motives of hope and of fear. You will ease the magistrate of his cares and fatigues; prevent the frauds and unravel the sophistries of law; thin our prisons and courts of justice; tear up the system of modern profligacy by the roots; rescue our highways, thoroughfares, places of the greatest and genteelst resort, our streets, and our houses, from the depredations of villany; disperse or extirpate the enemies of public decorum, and put an effectual end to every species of professional delinquency, fashionable enormity, venality of principle, or prostitution of talent; and all the various impositions which harass and alarm every walk of life. It is from you—ye parents, tutors, guardians, and directors of the rising generation; fathers, mothers, guides, benefactors, and friends of whatever is tenderest and dearest to the human heart; who, animated and warmed by the genius of your commission as delegates of God in the cause of innocence and heaven, inspired by all the gratitude you owe for the possession of blessings nameless, numberless, and invaluable; and appropriating honourably and conscientiously the powers you hold in trust—that your country, and the world at large, expect enlightened magistrates, upright statesmen, patriotic senators, intrepid soldiers, good fathers, good husbands, good brothers, good friends, disinterested citizens, and honest men!

MASTERS ! Pause but a moment on the meaning of this word, and it will strike you, however callous, or haughty, or self-conceited, to the heart !—One who controls and is himself uncontrolled, who commands others and is himself free, who is waited upon at his call, but himself waits upon none, who is more or less independent in proportion to the number dependent upon him ! And what claim or pretension has the best on earth to rights or endowments not of his own acquisition, to be other or higher, more rich, more honourable, or more powerful, than his fellows, to such a palpable superiority over creatures made of the same dust, animated by the same spirit, furnished with the same organs, and capable of the same improvements, that he is ? Observe the beasts of the field, the fowls of the air, and the fish of the sea ; none of them usurp the rights of another, but in consequence of greater strength, more agility, or a better address. Independent of these distinctions, is not all the pre-eminence you possess, however descended or allied, prosperous in trade, or fortunate in any of the numerous contingencies of life, such an instance of sovereignty, or of grace, as challenges the promptest, the sincerest, the most permanent practical acknowledgments ? Can the master of a family, a village, a city, a kingdom, or the whole world, ascribe his elevation or his dignity to any other cause than his righteous and wise ordination *by whom kings reign and princes decree judgment, and who doth according to his will among the armies of heaven and the inhabitants of the earth !* But for the gracious disposal of his kind providence, the most independent might have been flung among savages, and wasted a miserable existence in bondage, obscurity, or barbarism ; the wealthiest pined in indigence, the proudest grovelled in ignominy, and the highest and greatest ranked with the lowest and the least ! From these evils you are exempted and shielded ; but it is in that bosom where the lambs are carried and the ravens are fed ! Yours are the genial
 deities

dews of heaven, the sunshine, the morning, the cheerful spring and the fruitful summer; theirs the pinching frost and thickening shade, the black night, the autumn stripped of its fulness, and the winter big with misery and mischief, who with equal natures perhaps and better hearts are destined to a harder fate! And what do you give in return for such a multitude of favours? Are you better or holier than such as languish in want, while your *lot has fallen in pleasant places, and you have a goodly heritage!* Hath God raised you to his favour, to a state of independence, to share with him in the government of the world; and is it not your duty to act for him, to prefer his service, to promote his honour, to benefit his creatures?

No language, you well know, can be more natural, amiable, or winning, than that of gratitude for benefits received. It is the chaste and genuine emanation of a thankful and a full heart, warm and overflowing with acknowledgment from the recent and strong impression of undeserved and unexpected obligation! All nature is regular in nothing so much as in tendering this just tribute of homage to him who made her. What is the primary object of all her operations but the glory of her Maker! — and how otherwise can she fulfil her intentions than by that mutual advantage which her several productions derive from each other? To this hour the heavens roll their everlasting rounds in the most perfect concord! In all the diversified motions of the spheres not one ever interrupts another. The whole luminous assemblage of stars, which shine with distant but magnificent lustre, conspire to promote the good, the harmony, the grandeur, and the perfection of the universe. Which of the elements do not sweetly communicate among themselves the qualities they receive from heaven? The air gives to the earth of its light, its wind, and its rain; the sea impregnates the air with vapour; and both afford plants and animals whatever

is necessary for growth and nourishment. The very vicissitudes of the seasons are occasioned and preserved by a species of silent but mutual concession. Thus winter gives place to the spring, the spring to summer, and summer to autumn. There is consequently a perpetual succession of day and night, of light and darkness, of calm and storm, of wet and dry, of hot and cold. It is in this generous commerce which relieves, assimilates, and unites, the various parts of nature, that her beauty, utility, and harmony, consists. Interrupt this general concord of things, and the whole system will become disjointed and revert to its original chaos. Gratitude alone constitutes this divine union, and union is the soul of the universe, the ornament of heaven and earth, the life, the joy, the glory of both worlds ! The master who feels not what he owes to the Power who admitted him to a participation of that authority which rules over all, who emancipated him from servitude, or who placed him above it, is an exemption from the standing laws of nature, and a monster in the right estimation both of reason and religion. The only acknowledgment you can make for benefits thus great, precious, and peculiar, is by acting to the best of your capacity an honourable part, and leading a life both at home and abroad of exemplary worth. The gratuities of a good Providence will then have their natural effect, by promoting at once the present and future good of those immediately beneath you, about you, and under your eye.

There has seldom been a time more favourable to the practice of virtue under these circumstances. Among the vulgar it were vain to send you for instances of worth. The best things in them you are not anxious to emulate. Precedents from high life, even in the grossest absurdities, are adopted implicitly and unexceptionably. And you cannot, but with the worst grace imaginable, decline imitating your betters in actions of the greatest consequence, whose
manners

manners are so powerful a law in those of the least. Many are the illustrious characters in the highest orders of society, whose opinions and lives might well be expected to have the best influence on yours. Do not the amiable and good dispositions, the regularity, the condescension, and, above all, the piety of the supreme magistrate, merit your love and imitation? Why does not his purity of conduct, his religious sentiments, his attachment to the public worship of God, disgrace or put to the blush every species of libertinism in principle and practice? From the polished courtier to the clown or the peasant, all mimic the virtues and vices of superiors. What is there so unreasonable, so impious, or so monstrous, that fashion will not introduce and sanction? While the monarch is the model of the court, and the court of the nation, the manners of a good or a bad king must be the greatest blessing or the greatest curse. It is one of the proudest distinctions of our age and country that we live under a prince as good as he is great, as illustrious in virtue as he is exalted in place, and as superior in all the moralities of the heart and all the decencies of life as he is in wealth, dominion, and domestic felicity, to all the potentates in Europe! Who does not concur in the wish that qualities so dear and useful to society were exempted from the common frailties of humanity. But such is the condition of our being, that the best appointments on earth have no prescription against disease even to men of best abilities and best dispositions. And that we may not look upon crowns and sceptres but the tempest of cares in which they are always involved; that every motion of envy may die within us as we view the splendour and luxury of superiors; that we may feel the insignificance and transitory nature of whatever charms and fascinates our senses; that all may be struck dumb with conscious ingratitude for possessing unimproved, unacknowledged, and often ill employed, that reason which is the life of God in the soul of man; has not the first among

us in consequence, and the most conspicuous in worth, been reduced to a state of mind peculiarly awful and humiliating? Into what consternation and sorrow was not the whole kingdom plunged by the personal calamity of the Sovereign? It was felt like the shock of an earthquake when the foundations of the world are convulsed, and with the same mournful despondency that seizes a family abruptly bereft of its head and protector; an army whose officers or leaders are suddenly cut off; or passengers in a vessel deprived of its pilot in the very hour of imminent and inevitable danger.

Thanks be to God his Majesty recovers, and our hopes revive; his reason returns, and our confidence is restored; he reigns, and we are happy! An event the more gracious and acceptable that all expectations of it seemed to fail in proportion as it was solicited with eagerness, sincerity, and unanimity. Who does not rejoice that these melancholy interruptions to a health, on which so many interests and felicities depend, are thus happily removed, and that an example so important and becoming may yet continue to adorn the throne of these realms, and shed a most benign influence among a loyal and grateful people for many a year to come? Long may these nations be *blest in him*! And long may their unity, their allegiance, and their prosperity, make him *blest*! Surely we owe it to the grace of God, *who lifteth up one and casteth down another*, that we had full possession of all our comforts while he was thus fearfully bereft of his; and to that omnipotent arm, which preserves the universe from ruins, that we are not severally abandoned to all the horrors of insanity! Let the reason spared to us be virtuously employed, that the prostitution of the noblest gift of God render us not ultimately inexcusable: for, if it does not make us grateful and good, by impressing our hearts with a high sense of its value, it will certainly make us wretched, by incessantly putting us in mind how little we deserve it. And however
we

we abuse faculties thus capable of immortality, uncultivated, as they often remain, by the giddy and thoughtless; wherever we may fly to avoid the reflexions they suggest; little as they are occupied in making us *wise unto salvation*; and much as it is the fashion to discredit their religious application; the period presses upon every one of us when we must account for their exercise and improvement, and wish from the bottom of our hearts we had rated them higher and used them better.

PEOPLE OF RANK AND FORTUNE, whether *parents, masters, or individuals*, are deeply concerned in the purport and issue of this argument. The propriety of being first in worth, as first in place, requires neither proof nor illustration. Your soundest monitor, on a question so interesting, will be your own hearts, whose advice is always at hand; whose language is always plain; and who can be under no temptation to mislead or abuse your credulity. Whatever you are, or have, or hope, should impel you to act for God, for the species, and for your own safety.

The original equality of mankind is a fact which you cannot dispute, which you cannot forget, which you cannot recollect, without a mixture of wonder and gratitude! Our birth, our death, and many intermediate scenes of life, reduce both great and small to the same mortifying level. Whence then the palpable and prevailing disparity of our several conditions? Make a just estimate of each man's lot, by considering maturely all the circumstances of his fortune, and many differ not more from the animals beneath them than one man does from another! There are some who salute the first dawnings of a miserable destiny under all the horrors of the grossest vassalage, while you are free-born, nursed in the bosom of refinement, dandled in the lap of prosperity, and charmed, from the moment you open your eyes on the world, by the richest prospects

prospects its honours, its pleasures, or its profits, can disclose or command! Others, depressed by a feeble intellect or imperfect organs, carry nothing but maladies and deformities about them from the cradle to the grave. Should not this stamp a value upon those comely proportions which distinguish many of you from the crooked and diseased? Does it not endear the GIVER of them in your esteem? A present of the least article in dress, that might suit your taste, would excite your gratitude. And is nothing due to him for health so perfect, and forms so fair? Do you not derive from his bounty these exterior beauties and graces, that you may be in love only with that spiritual and immortal being, who, spurning the perishable pursuits of organized dust and ashes, bears the impression of God, participates of his nature, and aspires to his confidence? Why endowed with a genius capable of grasping all science, a sound judgment, a faithful memory, a rich imagination, and all the fairest faculties of a liberal and polished mind? Do not multitudes come into the world with bodies as handsome, and parts as promising, who are, notwithstanding, abandoned to want and obscurity; whose understandings, enveloped in ignorance and error, are absolutely precluded from whatever leads to duty or to happiness? What numbers of rational creatures have no distinctions from others but misfortunes; nothing of their own but afflictions; no patrimony but sin and misery! This banishes from their minds every gleam of comfort; makes them feed upon gall and wormwood all day long; and drenches their evenings and their mornings in tears. And do not at the same time, not only men and beasts, but all the elements of things, under the auspices of indulgent Heaven, minister to your convenience, swell your magnificence, and heighten your felicity? Look at the foot of the great wheel of life, as it runs its awful and mysterious round!—what shoals of helpless creatures are daily grinded by oppression, mangled by adversity, bowed down

7

with

with sorrow, or overwhelmed by despair; while you enjoy yourselves, and loll at ease on the top as on a couch of roses, and ride triumphant on the high places of the earth, respected by equals, adored by inferiors, feared by enemies, and carested by friends!

There is not a spot on the whole face of the globe more friendly and congenial to goodness than this. It is a storehouse of divine bounty, a paradise of pleasure, a glorious pavilion, which *your God* and the *God of your fathers* furnishes and spreads forth for accommodating you and yours. Other countries may excel it in a multitude of local, interior, and proximate advantages: they may enjoy milder climates, serener skies, more luxuriant soils; perhaps have less perfidious and dangerous enemies: but our insular situation, military character, public spirit, commercial genius, extensive dependencies, vast revenues, maritime superiority, equitable laws, free government, and religious liberty, render the British empire at once the envy, the mistress, and the wonder of the world!

The immunities of our civil, political, and sacred establishments, transcend all the wisest and the best institutions of the kind in ancient and modern times. The period in our history which gave form, stability, and operation, to these, has been * recently commemorated in a style peculiarly auspicious to public prosperity. The several festivities, adopted for a purpose thus honourable and important, were marked by some of the happiest circumstances. Little or none of that unmanly virulence, which stamps with obliquy the factious but impotent efforts of party rage, sullied the patriotic effusions of that joyful occasion. And the impression resulting from the glad recollection of an event so great, so interesting, and so memorable, united and called forth many of the best minds from all the most elevated ranks of life, from some of the most

* The 4th and 5th of November last. 1788.

fashionable circles, and even from societies the most adverse in political opinion, in one generous and pious ebullition of gratitude to heaven for mercies which none but Britons enjoy, which none but the God of nations could bestow.

These every Briton feels and reveres who knows the situation of his fellow-creatures in countries less free. In what other nation, or among what other people, do individuals possess so much independence, or realize such absolute security from every species of outrage? We have what liberty we please, on the sole condition of not interfering with that of others; we dare to live, and act, and speak like men; and these immunities, the gifts of indulgent Providence, and preserved by the struggles of a brave ancestry, are not the boons of a despot, but the birthright of Englishmen; not ours by sufferance but inheritance; not optional but unalienable. Our laws are regulations of common choice, not edicts of prerogative; the guardians of freemen, not the scourges of slaves; an asylum for the weak from the injuries of the strong, not an engine in the hands of a few for bending the necks of the many! Every man's house is his fortress, where none dare molest him but at their peril. We sit at our own fire-side, associate with our families, relish the sweets of domestic felicity, and resign ourselves to rest and retirement without anxiety or apprehension. Whatever property we acquire or inherit is our own, and at our own disposal. We have no master and no servant but by fair contract; and in the lowest as well as the highest situation are on a level with all, as all are subject with us to one legislature. We owe no obedience and yield none but to the aggregate voice of the community. No statute can be enacted, no taxes raised, no measures adopted, till our consent by our delegates in parliament is obtained. What are magistrates but the servants of the public, elected and rewarded for doing the public business, and never likely to govern so well

as in the confidence of being governed by the public. We know no power but what is under legal control; are always entitled to confront our accusers; and, in circumstances of the greatest delinquency, can demand an open trial by a jury of our peers. Thus our personal safety, our liberty, our property, our rights of private judgment, and all the solemn prerogatives of conscience, make part of that establishment which, in the British constitution, combines the liberality of an enlightened people with the wisdom and experience of ages. Surely, *Happy is that people that is in such a case; yea, happy is that people whose God is the Lord!*

THERE are local advantages involved in our circumstances which few other nations can boast. Our mountains teem with flocks and herds; our vallies are loaded with variety of the best corn; and our orchards, gardens, and even hedges, abound with all kinds of the healthiest and most useful fruit. No hurricanes or tornadoes tear up the labour and hopes of our husbandmen, mangle the plantations of the field, or involve both man and beast in the ruin of their habitations! No earthquakes raging around and beneath our feet wrap the busy multitude in horror, and threaten to bury the living among the dead! No volcanos, preying on the entrails of our mountains, impregnate our atmosphere with electrical vapour, or deluge our plains with liquid fire! No prowling monsters, from the pathless desert or the unfrequented forest, infest our dwellings or our haunts, prevent our rural excursions, or scare our social intercourse. We seldom hear the crash of battles, the shouts of the victor, or the groans of the wounded; and never see the warrior in *garments rolled in blood!* Famine thins not our streets; the demon of civil discord is at rest; and the pestilence, awful messenger of fate! rides no where through the land *on the pale horse of death.* Plenty and peace, ministers of present prosperity and

I

harbingers

harbingers of good things to come! are seen in all shapes and all places hand in hand, gladdening all faces by their presence, smiling and blessing a happy people! While religion, in all her purity, divinity and holiness, is cherished, protected, exemplified, and caressed, as the guardian of virtue, the guide of life, and the bond of society!

Thus Britain, like a well cultivated garden, is enriched by the choicest productions of nature, and happily clad and decorated in every season of the year by the loveliest and sweetest verdure. Our peasants are all free men, our commoners their own law-givers, our nobles princes, our houses palaces, our villages towns, our cities marts of commerce and treasuries of wealth; and our whole island, happily situated at a convenient distance from the troubles and intrigues of a restless and hostile continent, appears the pride and glory of the whole earth! Even that rude unmanageable element, which once overwhelmed the world, hath the Most High God appointed us *for walls and bulwarks!*

YE, who more or less are raised above others, constitute the principal figure in this interesting picture; and the peculiar excellence or deformity with which you strike the eyes of all beholders must sensibly brighten or obscure the whole. Put the case, that any of your most confidential domestics repaid your indulgence with treachery, dealt perfidiously with your interest, embezzled your property, connived with your enemies, corrupted your servants or seduced your children! Has language any term sufficiently harsh or significant for a conduct so flagitious? And what better can yours be deemed whom all the indulgence of exalted station, enormous wealth, or extraordinary parts, only make worse! Are you not placed in society under circumstances palpably impressed by the partiality and confidence of heaven? Your privileges cannot

be overlooked while memory retains her powers, or one good impulse warms your hearts; nor once seriously called to mind without an immediate surrender of yourselves to his service who conferred them. Whoever can lead vicious lives under the sense of so many obligations to virtue, or resist the influence of the best examples, all the good things of this world, and all the hopes of another, degrade the spheres they fill, and prostitute the natures they share! however great, opulent, or respectable in others eyes or their own, the part they act is dishonourable, because ungrateful; unmanly, because unjust; low, because false; and vulgar, because base. Thus highly favoured by nature, by God, and by society, they are like nothing within the boundaries of creation so much as the waste howling wilderness, which returns the genial warmth, and rains, and dews of heaven; with briars, and thistles, and thorns, parched promontories, bleak winds, and clouds of dust; barren trees in the most fruitful vallies; poisonous herbs, in the gayest parterres; venomous insects in the healthiest springs; wasps among plants which feed the industrious bee with honey; or nests of deadly vermin covered by clusters of the sweetest flowers!

T H E E N D.

